Global Gene Giants

655. SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some global gene giants are trying to patent climate resilient crops evolved through centuries of breeding by Indian farmers;

(b) whether Government has created any mechanism to monitor such attempts by global giants; and

(c) the steps Government is taking to protect the interests of the Indian farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) No, Sir. It has not come to our notice that some global gene giants are trying to patent climate resilient crops evolved through centuries of breeding by Indian farmers. However, National Biodiversity Authority is vigilant to collect the information and take appropriate steps as and when such patents are issued by the competent agencies. The access to different bioresources of India is regulated as per Biological Diversity Act, 2002.

(b) A mechanism created by the Government is the establishment of National Biodiversity Authority. In addition, the State Biodiversity Boards and Biodiversity Management Committees are being established at the local body level to educate and regulate the access and utilization of bio-resources.

(c) The Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Act, 2001 provides scope for the Registration of Farmers' Varieties. The registration, once granted, protects the interests of the Indian Farmers through Registration of Farmer's Varieties. The registration, once granted, protects the interests of the Indian Farmers through Benefit Sharing and other provisions of Act. The Protection of Plant Varieties & Farmers' Rights Authority has so far notified 18 crop species including major cereals and pulses for registration and so far eleven applications to register farmers' varieties have been received. The ICAR institutes, State Agricultural Universities and NGOs have been sensitized by way of several training programmes to promote the registration. In addition, the National Biodiversity Authority has constituted expert committees to evaluate and clear the access to Indian bioresources and decide about benefit sharing by stakeholders from the agency which commercializes the bioresources.

Indian Scientists

656. SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the efforts Government is making to bring good Indian scientists working abroad to our laboratories;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) and (b) The Scientific Departments under the Government of India have made various efforts to bring good Indian scientists working abroad to our laboratories, as per the details given below: